

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2379

INFO AMCONSUL CAPETOWN

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 07711

E. O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, RH, UK

SUBJECT: SIR DENIS GREENHILL' S IMPRESSIONS OF
RHODESIAN SITUATION

REF: LONDON 7455 AND LONDON 7501

1. AT AMBASSADOR' S 4 TH OF JULY RECEPTION EMBOFF HAD
OCCASION TO TALK WITH SIR DENIS GREENHILL, FCO PERM-
ANENT UNDER SECRETARY, ABOUT HIS RECENT MISSION TO
RHODESIA. SIR DENIS SAID HE HAD BEEN IMPRESSED WITH
STATESMANLIKE STANCE ADOPTED BY ANC LEADERSHIP. HE
DEPLORED FACT THAT SO LITTLE NOTICE HAD BEEN TAKEN OF
AC' S ABANDONMENT OF " ONE- MAN, ONE- VOTE" DEMAND.
WHEN ASKED IF ANC WAS NOT UNDER PRESSURE FROM MORE
MILITANT ELEMENTS, GREENHILL SAID HE THOUGHT THAT AT
PRESENT AFRICAN LEADERSHIP WAS RELATIVELY IMPERVIOUS TO
OUTSIDE INFLUENCES LIKE THAT EXERTED BY THE LIBERATION
MOVEMENTS AND THE MORE RADICAL AFRICAN STATES. IN
RESPONSE TO A SUGGESTION THAT WITH THE PASSAGE OF TIME
THE ANC WOULD FIND IT MORE DIFFICULT TO MAINTAIN A
MODERATE STANCE, GREENHILL ACKNOWLEDGED THE POSSIBILITY
BUT THOUGHT THAT MILITANT VIEWS WOULD NOT BE A SIGNI-
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FICANT FACTOR IN THE NEAR TERM.

2. TURNING TO RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT' S ATTITUDE, GREENHILL SAID SMITH IS " NOBODY' S FOOL". HE EXPLAINED SMITH' S HARD LINE SPEECH MADE AFTER GREENHILL HAD LEFT SALISBURY BY SAYING THAT SMITH WAS REQUIRED TO MAKE SUCH A STATEMENT IN ORDER TO REASSURE CONSERVATIVE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT THAT HE WOULD NOT BE NEGOTIATING BEHIND THEIR BACKS WHILE PARLIAMENT IS NOT IN SESSION. GREENHILL POINTED OUT THAT THE RHODESIAN PARLIAMENT DOES NOT MEET OFTEN AND SMITH' S SPEECH WAS A PARTING SHOT WHICH DID NOT NECESSARILY BIND HIM TO ANY PARTICULAR POLICY LINE OVER THE COMING MONTHS. WHEN ASKED IF HE THOUGHT SMITH WAS SUFFICIENTLY FLEXIBLE TO COMPROMISE WITH THE ANC WHILE THAT POSSIBILITY STILL EXISTED, SIR DENIS SAID (AND HE UNDERScoreD THAT THIS WAS NOT FOR ATTRIBUTION) THAT HE HAD SOME PERSONAL DOUBTS ON THIS SCORE, ALTHOUGH HE CONTINUED TO HOPE THAT A COMPROMISE WOULD BE POSSIBLE.

3. COMMENT: OUR NET IMPRESSION IS THAT HMG, AS REFLECTED IN GREENHILL' S REMARKS AND THOSE OF OTHER OFFICIALS, WANTS TO CONTINUE TO PROJECT THE MOST HOPEFUL INTERPRETATION POSSIBLE CONCERNING RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN RHODESIA. AT SAME TIME, HOWEVER, IT IS BESET WITH THE NAGGING FEAR THAT THINGS ARE JUST NOT GOING TO WORK OUT ACCORDING TO BRITISH ORIGINAL EXPECTATIONS AND CONTINUING HOPES.

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